

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 30, 2015

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Pritzker:

We are writing to encourage you to use reprogramming authority to provide the necessary resources for the Office of Enforcement and Compliance (OEC) to investigate the historic number of trade petitions recently filed with the office by U.S. industry. These antidumping and countervailing duty cases, many of which have been brought by the steel industry, are American manufacturers' most effective method of addressing foreign competitors' unfair trade practices. As such, it is critical that the OEC has sufficient analysts to conduct these investigations and evaluate the trade petitions in an accurate and efficient manner.

Unfortunately, as a result of persistent and increasingly harmful global unfair trade practices, American manufacturers and workers have been forced to bring a growing number of trade cases to the OEC. Between 2012 and 2014 the case load before the OEC more than doubled, and this year, the case load is estimated to increase by at least another 20 percent. At the same time, the number of OEC analysts has declined to its lowest point in more than 10 years. An estimated 62 AD and CVD petitions are expected to be filed this year, and 104 analysts in OEC will be tasked with reviewing them. In 2002, when 60 petitions were filed, OEC had 168 analysts on staff. These drastic staffing reductions mean fewer analysts are doing more work on increasingly complicated trade cases that are critical to maintaining a robust manufacturing sector. Without additional resources to hire more analysts, OEC will continue to face an overwhelming workload with an inadequate number of analysts. As a result, American businesses and workers may face longer delays before receiving trade enforcement relief.

We know that budgets are tight throughout the Commerce Department and across all federal agencies, but processing trade petitions quickly and accurately is critical to the competitiveness of the U.S. manufacturing sector. We ask that you use your existing reprogramming authority to increase OEC's resources. Doing so is necessary to respond to the historic number of trade petitions filed by domestic industry and to ensuring U.S. trade laws are fully enforced.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter. We look forward to working with you to combating unfair trade practices and supporting American manufacturers.

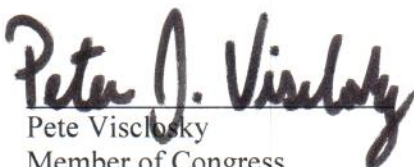
Sincerely,



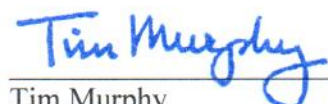
Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Jeff Sessions
United States Senator



Pete Visclosky
Member of Congress



Tim Murphy
Member of Congress